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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 404, 1003, 1023

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I stand in support of Senator Beutler and Senator Schrock's amendment. I just wanted to say that last year I did introduce the concept of the Water Task Force, and that bill is LB 404 that's on General File. However this session we, as a committee, put a more detailed bill together under LB 1023. We did pattern it a great deal after the LR 455, I believe that's the resolution, on the deregulation of the electricity industry. Because I was involved in that, Senator Beutler was involved in that, many members of the Natural Resources, and it seemed to be a good pattern to follow to get a lot of input on an issue that's very important to our state. And that resolution had to do with the deregulation of the electric industry, and we certainly came out with some very good concepts and advice. Senator Schrock, I was wondering if you could share, Section 3, where we've talked about a facilitator, what is the intent, if you would reply, please.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Yeah, Senator Stuhr, the facilitator, I think, is very important because they're professional, they're trained, and they will keep the...keep us focused and moving. I think without that we might have a bunch of people sitting around in the room and we would talk about a lot of issues but never get anything done. So I think a facilitator will keep us focused. As you noticed, I didn't cover the five issues that I think will be important for the policy task force, so I'm sure there will be subcommittees as a part of the task force.

SENATOR STUHR: Okay. Thank you. And could you also comment on the funding because, as we know with any group, and particularly when we're going to have people employed, so to speak, to monitor, could you share the funding aspect that you've come up with?

SENATOR SCHROCK: It became very obvious to me that it's going to be painful to take this money from the General Fund, so \$250,000 is coming from the Soil and Water Conservation Fund. That's a fund used for...used by our NRDs, and a lot of it is cost-sharing or best management practices on our agricultural